

NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN



SEPTEMBER
1940

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF
PARENTS AND TEACHERS, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

PLEASE PASS ON TO

Dear Local President:

The question before parent-teacher members today concerning national defense is not in which organization or agency to take an active part, but rather how better to understand the central role that their own parent-teacher organization plays in the total program of common defense.

Miss Harriet Elliott of the Advisory Commission on National Defense recently said, "We must remember that national defense is more than planes and guns . . . We have a positive responsibility for strengthening the human defenses of the country, and we are viewing our task in terms of the well-being of men, women, and children in the United States."

Through our knowledge of children and our practical experience with them, we have learned that a sense of security is necessary for the best development of the child. Any society which fails to provide this essential for childhood is failing to do its full duty in a democracy. Preparation for war and talk of war are not conducive to emotional security, especially if these pursuits take precedence over all others. It becomes our major task, therefore, to keep our children's lives as normal as possible and exert even greater effort than in ordinary times to assure them adequate education, conservation of health, and opportunity for economic security.

Far, then, from the need for parent-teacher services to childhood being lessened, these services must be underlined in the nation's program for national defense. As an important link in this defense program, we must, with all the ingenuity at our command, increase our efforts to enlist more and more people in our parent-teacher ranks. It is my firm belief that in this time of crisis we can do our part, without departing from the fundamental objectives of our organization, by acting efficiently and wisely to protect the institutions and services which are essential to the welfare of America's children and the survival of the American way of life.

Sincerely yours,

Virginia Kletz

President
National Congress of Parents and Teachers

ANNOUNCEMENT

In the National Congress over two and one-third million parents and teachers work together for children and youth. This great democratic organization is served well and faithfully by many leaders — national, state, and local. All have a responsibility in carrying forward the active educational program of the organization.

Believing that these local and state leaders would like to hear from all of their national officers, Mrs. William Kletz, the national president, has asked each officer to write a message for the BULLETIN. The first message, from Mrs. William A. Hastings, first vice-president, will appear in the October issue. Mrs. Kletz's messages to the membership will, as heretofore, be published each month in the NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER, and she will from time to time contribute a special message to the BULLETIN.

PARENT-TEACHER MEMBERSHIP WEEK

● Parent-Teacher Week, initiating or climaxing membership enrollment activities, will be observed in many states during the next few weeks.

The broad purpose of Parent-Teacher Week is to build public opinion so that the needs of children in a democracy may be met.

Carrying out the suggestion of the national president last July that early plans be made for this occasion, many states have obtained proclamations from the governor of the state and are rapidly completing their programs of activity for the week. One state plans the development of special programs for each day during Parent-Teacher Week on topics which are to be emphasized during the year.

Anticipating a large growth in this year's membership enrollment, the National Congress has sent more than 3,000,000 membership cards to state branches for distribution.

That membership in the P.T.A. is increasingly important to fathers, mothers, and teachers is indicated by the steady growth in size of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. Nearly a million members have been added to its ranks since 1930. Only an organization which fulfills a vital need in the lives of people could attract and hold the interest of such a large number of citizens.

But large numbers of members are never sought merely for the sake of building a big organization. What is essential is the understanding and support and cooperation of enough people to make America conscious of what it needs to do for its children.

Playing an important part in P.T.A. activities today are the men members. No longer are they content with an occasional "Fathers Night" but are playing a real part in the fight to maintain high educational standards and to improve community conditions which make such standards possible.



P. T. A. BULLETIN BOARD

Summer Round-Up of the Children

BOBBY GOES TO SCHOOL

"When Bobby Goes to School," a new motion picture, is arousing much interest among Summer Round-Up committees and other health workers.

This picture was made under the sponsorship of the American Academy of Pediatrics at the request of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, after discussion of the need for such a film with the Advisory Committee of the Summer Round-Up. It shows the value and techniques of periodic health examinations with special reference to the school-age child and gives to parents a better understanding of what is an adequate medical examination.

P. T. A.'s desiring to show the picture should get in touch with the county medical society. A written request from an officer of the county medical society must be sent to Dr. Warren M. Cox, Mead Johnson Company, Evansville, Indiana. Requests should be sent several weeks in advance of the date for which the film is desired.

A 16-mm. sound projector and an empty 800-foot reel are required for showing the picture.

ROUND-UP REPORTS

Report blanks have recently been sent to states for each local association participating in the 1940 Summer Round-Up campaign. Each local unit registered for the Round-Up is expected to submit a report before November 1, in accordance with instructions previously given. Local units which have not yet received a report blank should get in touch with the state chairman of the Summer Round-Up.

NATIONAL MEETINGS

AMONG conferences and conventions of national agencies at which the National Congress of Parents and Teachers will have representation next month are the following:

- National Recreation Congress, in Cleveland, September 30-October 4
- National Safety Congress, in Chicago, October 7-11
- American Public Health Association, in Detroit, October 8-11
- American Dietetic Association, in New York City, October 21

The National Congress had an exhibit at the convention of the American Dental Association in Cleveland, September 9-12. The Ohio Congress took charge of the exhibit.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE

Mrs. William Kletzer has accepted membership on the committee on national agency programs, a subject committee of the National Citizens Committee of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy.

SAFE AT HOME

Through the Traffic Safety Education Project, now in its fifth year, the National Congress is continuing its adult education program for safety and its participation in the organized safety movement. A study of how this great social problem is touching parent-teacher families was made by the Project last year. In the 5,000 parent-teacher families participating in the Family Accident Survey, it was revealed that home accidents exceeded the combined number of automobile, public, and occupational accidents.

Future development of the Safety Education Project in each state was discussed by state presidents at regional safety conferences conducted this summer in San Francisco, Knoxville, and New York. A fourth conference is to be held in Chicago in December.

Local associations may secure safety education materials from the state Safety chairman or from the Traffic Safety Education Project, National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

FOR MOTHERSINGERS

Announcement has been made of the six songs to be presented by the National Mothersingers Chorus at the 1941 National Convention in Boston next May. It is recommended that the program of songs selected for the national chorus be used by state and local groups. A plateprint listing the songs is being distributed through the state branches.

FOR HIGH-SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

Two pamphlets in which high-school associations will be interested are:

1. Should Youth Organize?
2. Youth, Defense, and the National Welfare

These publications may be secured free from the American Youth Commission, 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C.

NATIONAL RADIO PLANS

Presentation of a series of broadcasts by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Company is being planned to begin in January, 1941. An early issue of the *National Congress Bulletin* will carry a list of program topics and the time schedule.

HOW DO YOU USE THE BULLETIN?

It is suggested that the space boxed on page 1 be used in routing the *National Congress Bulletin* each month to parent-teacher officers and chairmen. The *Bulletin* will be especially helpful to the president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and chairmen of the committees on the National Parent-Teacher, Publicity, Congress Publications, Program, and Membership.

Congress units are encouraged to use the material in the *Bulletin* in keeping the membership and the public in touch with the work of the Congress through the publicity channels available to the organization — newspapers, radio, newsletters, and others.

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE ACCEPTED

The *National Congress Bulletin* is sent to each local Congress unit, twenty cents of the dues being set aside for this subscription.

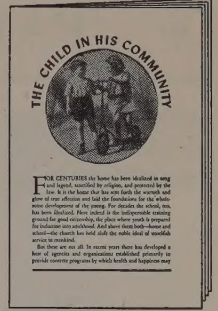
Individual officers and chairmen who desire to receive the *Bulletin* may subscribe at the regular rate of twenty cents a year. Council presidents and state board members will find it invaluable in keeping abreast of developments in the National Congress.

Subscriptions should be accompanied by twenty cents.

THE CHILD IN HIS COMMUNITY

Beginning at Home

"Encourage family life and standards of living that will assure to each child the essentials of food, clothing, health, and material security as well as those experiences which mean education, happiness, and character building."—From *THE CHILD IN HIS COMMUNITY*



STATES and communities must identify the recommendations and findings adopted by the 1940 White House Conference on Children in a Democracy in terms of local situations if these recommendations and findings are to be effective.

Believing that the conclusions reached by this nationally representative conference group can be interpreted and expanded with profit to the nation in homes which furnish the membership of 28,000 parent-teacher, community organizations, the *Bulletin* introduces a series of discussions on "The Child in His Community," the National Congress theme for the next three years, with a page devoted first to family problems.

WHAT IS ESSENTIAL?

GIVING the child food, shelter, and material security in general is a primary task of the family. In the family there is opportunity also to teach the elements of personal hygiene, health, and the prevention of disease. Relationships with the doctor, the hospital, and other community services may be established.

But more important by far is what the child acquires through the family in regard to his relations with his fellows. Standards of conduct may be formed by fear or example; they may be enforced by authority or by persuasion.

It is essential to democracy that self-respect and self-reliance, as well as respect for others and a cooperative attitude, be fostered. These characteristics may best be acquired in childhood if the relationship among mem-

bers of the family is of a democratic quality.

DIFFERENCES IN INCOME

A NECESSARY condition of the family's capacity to serve the child is an income sufficient to provide the essentials.

Parents, being human, differ from one another in competence, character, capacity to plan, energy, industry, re-

TEST YOUR SOCIAL SENSE

1. What can the P.T.A. do to encourage high standards of family life for every child?
2. Can you work out a budget which includes medicine, insurance, church donations, transportation, and newspapers on a maintenance level income?
3. Are diets which are made up mainly of oleomargarine, flour, potatoes, canned milk, and dried beans adequate?
4. What is a farm slum? a city slum?
5. Why do village families have poorer diets than farm or city families?
6. Why do farm tenants move so often?
7. Are children on relief receiving the security which home life should give?
8. Does poverty build strong character? Can it thwart personality?

sourcefulness. For this reason, some parents will achieve a fine home under adverse conditions while others will fail to do so under favorable circumstances. These differences among parents are to be found in high places and low, among the wealthy and the poor. They involve good fortune for one child or an added handicap for another. Whatever these differences may be, some degree of material security is essential for the life and happiness of every family.

SOME MODERN PROBLEMS

WITH the decrease in family size and the development of science and industry, it might be assumed that all families today would be assured of income sufficient for their needs. Estimates based on the number of children in families at different income levels in 83 cities show that one-half to two-thirds of the children in American cities live in homes where the family income is less than the equivalent of \$1,260 (the maintenance level of living) for a family of four.

The effect of unemployment upon children is serious because the family in which there are small children is likely to be one in which the only adult who can work is the father. The National Health Survey has found that 21.6 per cent of all families with children had resorted to government assistance. One estimate states that 30 per cent of the nation's children are in families which at one time or another had been assisted directly or indirectly.

Farm and other rural homes house half the nation's children under fifteen years of age, but contrary to general opinion, many farm houses are in effect "slum" structures, and this is particularly true of rented farms where occupancy changes often. One million of the three million farm-tenant families moved in a single year (1935). Upkeep of the dwellings is usually poor. Far below even this range are the shelters of migrant families.

REMOVING OBSTACLES

WHAT can the P.T.A. do about these obstacles to family life in its best sense? Support government projects, yes, as long as they are needed. Study the best methods of consumer purchasing, the ways of home economics. Then, remembering the more intangible contributions of the home, the P.T.A. will search out new ways to build character, to create an atmosphere of happiness which is the real goal of the family.

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PARENT-TEACHER PUBLICATIONS



OFFICIAL
MAGAZINE

WHENEVER subscribers to the *National Parent-Teacher* meet these days the topic of conversation is the August-September issue. The new cover, the new paper, the new illustrations, the interesting articles so invitingly presented — all come in for their share of discussion. Many of these subscribers are already predicting that the *National Parent-Teacher* will double its circulation within a year.

SUBSCRIBERS WANT AUGUST-SEPTEMBER ISSUE

Almost every subscription received during the past two weeks is prefaced with the question: Can you start this with the August-September number?

Since we anticipated a great demand for copies of this issue, we ordered an extra supply and are prepared to take care of at least 5,000 more subscriptions, starting with the August-September issue. Therefore, if it was impossible for you to send your order earlier, send it along now and we will be glad to start the subscription with the August-September number.

We also have arranged to take care of orders from groups that are planning to follow one or both of the two new study courses which started in this issue: *This World of Ours*, for parents who have children of adolescent age, and *Beginnings with Children*, for parents of preschool children. But enough about the August-September number: Let us see what is in the October issue.

COMING IN OCTOBER

Ever since "Curtains for the Last Day" appeared in the May 1940 issue, subscribers have been requesting another feature by A. L. Crabb. We are therefore pleased to announce that for October he has contributed "Sheep in McGuffey's Third." Here is a delightful story about Eli McDaniel, a prob-

lem pupil in Old Plum Springs, who was rescued from illiteracy by his schoolmates through their ingenuity and sheer audacity.

"Is Spanking Necessary?" by Sidonie M. Gruenberg discusses such questions as:

What are some reasons that may be given to justify spanking?

Why do many authorities feel that corporal punishment is unwise?

In "To Be or Not to Be-Safe" Frank W. Hubbard emphasizes the need for all adults, especially parents, to take the safety problem seriously, and outlines the first step in safety education.

Other articles appearing in October are: "Helping Children to Health," by Katharine F. Lenroot; "Citizenship Can Be Taught," by G. L. Maxwell; "Health in War and Peace," by Mary E. Murphy; and "It Is a Small World," by Malcolm S. MacLean.

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28,000 PROMOTION PACKETS DISTRIBUTED

A promotion packet containing information helpful to those who are directly responsible for carrying on the magazine work has been mailed to each of the 28,000 local units of the National Congress. Will all local presidents please read this material, discuss it with their local chairmen, and plan how it may best be used to promote the official magazine of the Congress!

Any local association that has not received one of these promotion packets by the end of September should communicate at once with the Magazine Office in Chicago.

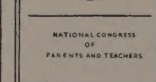
JUST OFF PRESS

JUST off the press is *Projects and Purposes*, a pamphlet of forty-eight pages which traces the origin and progress of parent-teacher work. Publicity chairmen and others interested

in public relations can draw upon it for material to reveal the role that the Congress has played in the life of our nation by maintaining a continuous program for the care and protection of children and youth. Students searching for source material to use in theses on the development of the parent-teacher movement will find it sound and authoritative. Culled from the archives of the Congress, the material in it is of absorbing interest to those who are looking for stories and facts for future use in Founders Day talks and addresses. *Projects and Purposes* is supplied free to state branches for distribution on the basis of one to each local association.

SCHOOLS FOR DEMOCRACY

Another recent publication, now in its third printing, is *Schools for Democracy*. This handy, pocket-size book of 239 pages has already given thousands of parents a better understanding of America's public schools. The material for *Schools for Democracy* was contributed to the National Congress by eminent writers in literary and school fields. It was only through their cooperation and interest that the National Congress is able to offer this book to its membership for 25c.



Schools for Democracy is being used by study groups interested in discussions dealing with citizenship, school education, activities for promoting democracy, and many other related subjects.